



ELECTION FOCUS 2008

October 24, 2008

No. 18

*** 10 Days until Election Day (Nov. 4) ***

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America.gov
Telling America's Story

Latest News

In the days remaining until Election Day, both candidates are campaigning across the country, especially eager to win support from voters in key battleground states. Here is a summary of their recent campaign activities – **October 23, 2008**



[Road to the White House: Barack Obama](#)

[Road to the White House: John McCain](#)

Left: Barack Obama waves at a Leesburg, Virginia, rally October 22.

Right: John McCain greets supporters in Pennsylvania, October 8.



[McCain Presidency Would Likely Expand Bush Africa Policy](#) (10-22-2008)

As U.S. president, John McCain would likely pursue and build upon current programs and policies for Africa. Herman Cohen, African specialist and State Department official in the administration of George H.W. Bush, expands on that viewpoint in an interview with America.gov. ...

[Obama Presidency Would Bring New Dimension to Africa Policy](#) (10-22-2008)

Electing Barack Obama the next president of the United States would bring a new dimension to U.S. foreign policy, particularly with regard to Africa, Howard Wolpe, director of the Africa program at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars in Washington, tells America.gov. ...

[No Major Shakeup Likely in US Two-Party Political System](#) (10-22-2008)

Political analysts at a Washington event hosted by the National Archives agree the American two-party system likely will exist for the foreseeable future, but that the end might be near for a conservative cycle in U.S. governance that began with the election of President Ronald Reagan in 1980. ...

[McCain, Obama Call for More Engagement with Russia, Europe](#) (10-21-2008)

The next U.S. president will need to address the resurgence of Russia. Neither Barack Obama nor John McCain predicts a return to Cold War rhetoric and behavior of the 1960s and 1970s, but they agree international pressures need to be brought to bear on Russia to encourage changes in its behavior. ...

[World Looking to America for Leadership, Colin Powell Says](#) (10-20-2008)

The next U.S. president will convey a new image of leadership to the world, former Secretary of State Colin Powell says. Powell, a Republican, announces after months of deliberation that he will give his vote to Democrat Barack Obama because Powell believes Obama is the best person to convey this image. ...



["Youthquake" Expected in 2008 US Election](#) (10-17-2008)

Youth voting and increased youth engagement in the 2008 election process were the topic of a forum in Washington. It was sponsored by American University and held on October 14. Panelists discussed "Youthquake '08: How Millennials are Shaking Up the Media, Mavericks, and History-Makers This Election."

Daily updated information is available at a special **U.S. Elections** page at:
<http://usplitics.america.gov/uspolitics/elections/>

Blogs at America.gov CAMPAIGN TRAIL TALK



<http://blogs.america.gov/campaign/>

Provides running commentary and information on the 2008 elections in the United States. This blog keeps readers up to date on news, rumors and political chatter surrounding thousands of political races. Readers may ask questions about the electoral process, post their comments about the candidates, and generally guide the discussion.

Michelle Austein keeps you up to date on the candidates, issues and quirky happenings in the 2008 campaign, the third national election cycle she's covered. [Full Biography](#)

From the blog:

[Is high turnout for early voting good news for Obama?](#) — 23 October 2008

[Palin's appearance boosts comedy show](#) — 21 October 2008

[Does Colin Powell's endorsement matter?](#) — 20 October 2008

[McCain, Obama spar over free trade](#) — 17 October 2008

POLLS

National Polls Show Obama Leads Ranging from One to 13 Points

All national polls continue to show Barack Obama leading John McCain in the race for the White House. However, the size of that lead varies widely. As the [AP](#) reports, "Obama is galloping away with the presidential race. Or maybe he has a modest lead. Or maybe he and...McCain are neck and neck. Confusing? Sure, thanks to the dueling results of recent major polls."

The [IBD](#) /TIPP daily presidential tracking poll of 1,068 likely voters taken October 18-22 shows Obama leading McCain **45%-44%**.

The George Washington University [Battleground](#) poll of 1,000 likely voters taken October 16 and October 19-22 shows Obama leading McCain **49%-45%**.

The [Gallup](#) daily presidential tracking poll of 2,799 registered voters taken October 20-22 has two likely voter models – one (based on past voting behavior and current intention to vote) shows Obama leading McCain **50%-46%**, while the second (based on current intention to vote) shows Obama up **51%-45%**.

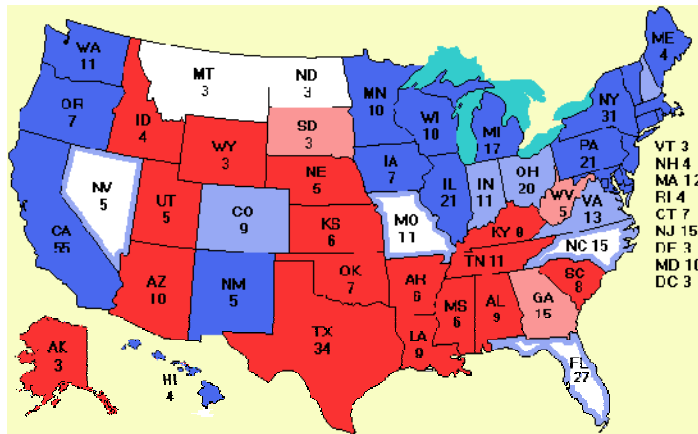
The [Rasmussen Reports](#) daily presidential tracking poll for October 23 shows Obama leading McCain **52%-45%**.

The C-Span/[Zogby](#) daily presidential tracking poll of 1,203 likely voters taken October 21-23 shows Obama leading McCain **52%-42%**.

The [ABC News](#) /Washington Post daily presidential tracking poll of 1,335 likely voters taken October 19-22 shows Obama leading McCain **54%-43%**.

A [CBS News/NYTimes](#) poll of 771 likely voters taken October 19-22 shows the largest lead of all, with Obama ahead by 13 points, **52%-39%**. The [CBS Evening News](#) reported last night, "It is simple math, but a very difficult task: John McCain has just 12 days to make up a 13-point deficit in the presidential race." Also reporting on the poll, the [New York Times](#) says "Obama is showing surprising strength among portions of the political coalition that returned George W. Bush to the White House four years ago, a cross section of support that, if it continues through Election Day, would exceed that of Bill Clinton in 1992, according to the latest New York Times/CBS News polls."

VOTE PREDICTOR



- Strong Dem (260)
- Weak Dem (57)
- Barely Dem (58)
- Exactly tied (6)
- Barely GOP (0)
- Weak GOP (23)
- Strong GOP (134)

270 Electoral votes needed to win

[Map algorithm explained](#)

“

Today (October 24, 2008)

Obama 375 McCain 157 Ties 6

This day in 2004 (October 24, 2004)

Kerry 253 Bush 254

CAMPAIGN 2008



[Hope or Glory? The Presidential Election and U.S. Foreign Policy.](#)

By Michael Fullilove, The Brookings Institution, October 23, 2008

The contest between Senators John McCain and Barack Obama for the presidency of the United States is being followed intently around the world. Michael Fullilove examines the foreign policy differences between the two candidates and explores how international perceptions of the U.S. may shift following the election.

[Why Do Terrorists Love To Strike Around Elections?](#)

By Daniel Benjamin, The Brookings Institution, October 22, 2008

Daniel Benjamin analyzes the trend for jihadists to act in the run-up to or months following an election. Benjamin argues that organizations like al-Qaeda want to leave their fingerprints on big historical events, because they want to be seen as a central player in determining the outcome.

[Early Voting Shows No Sign of Slowing](#) - By John C. Fortier. American Enterprise Institute, Oct. 21, 2008

By 2004, nearly one-fourth of votes came before the officially designated Election Day, and the percentage in 2008 will likely exceed 30 percent. The trend toward early voting shows little sign of slowing, and we may never even go back to a single Election Day. Still, Americans should consider if this is how they really want to vote, as concerns linger about ballot security and privacy.

[Most Voters Say News Media Wants Obama to Win. "Joe the Plumber" a Top Campaign Story.](#)

Pew Research Center, October 22, 2008.

Voters overwhelmingly believe that the media wants Barack Obama to win the presidential election. By a margin of 70%-9%, Americans say most journalists want to see Obama, not John McCain, win on Nov. 4. Another 8% say journalists don't favor either candidate, and 13% say they don't know which candidate most reporters support.

More from the Pew Research Center (PewResearch.org)

[Liberal Democrats Top Conservative Republicans in Donations, Activism](#) - 23 Oct 08

[Latinos Account for Half of U.S. Population Growth Since 2000](#) - 23 Oct 08

[Canvassing Campaign Media: An Analysis of Time, Tone and Topics](#) - 22 Oct 08

[Doubts Grow About McCain's Judgment, Age and Campaign](#) - 21 Oct 08

[Polls and Plumbers Drive Narrative](#) - 21 Oct 08

ARTICLE ALERT

THE CASE FOR BARACK OBAMA; Obama is pushing to change the parameters of the country's comfort zone. That's leadership. *By Fareed Zakaria, Newsweek, Oct 27, 2008, Vol. 152, Iss. 17*

Barack Obama's broader economic agenda-health-care reform, infrastructure investments and a major push for alternative energy-are large solutions to the growing problems of our times. They are not radical, but neither are they overly constrained by the fear of seeming liberal. Bill and Hillary Clinton were always careful not to stray too far from the country's comfort zone. Obama is pushing to change the parameters of that zone. That's leadership.

[FULL TEXT](#)

THE WARS OF JOHN MCCAIN. *By Jeffrey Goldberg. Atlantic, October 2008, Vol. 302, No.3, pages 40-54.*

John McCain believes the Vietnam War was winnable. Now he argues that an Obama administration would accept defeat in Iraq, with grave costs to American honor and national security. Is McCain's quest for victory a reflection of an antiquated pre-Vietnam mind-set? Or of a commitment to principles we abandon at our peril? Is there any war McCain thinks can't be won? [FULL TEXT](#)

PANICS AND POLITICS. *By John Steele Gordon The American. October 22, 2008.*

How often have U.S. financial crises been followed by major political realignments?

Two post-crisis elections, in 1896 and 1932, were focused overwhelmingly on economic issues stemming from a depression. In each case, the victorious party became the dominant force in American politics for a generation.

[FULL TEXT](#)

RESTORING AMERICA'S IMAGE: WHAT THE NEXT PRESIDENT CAN DO. *By Mitchell B. Reiss. Survival, Vol 50, No. 5, October 2008, pages 99 – 114.* America's image in the world today is not all that it should be.

Blame for this is most often assigned to President George W. Bush, but greater responsibility rests with deeper changes in the international system: the resentment (and fear) caused by the preponderance of American power, the loosening of alliances after the demise of the Soviet Union, a fundamental rethinking of the laws of war and peace in an age of terror, the co-branding of the United States with the forces of modernity and globalisation, and a demographic change that has sidelined the post-Second World War generation with their historical memories of American bravery and generosity. The next US president can start to restore America's image by setting a new tone, adroitly managing the US presence in the Persian Gulf and adopting new policies on climate change, immigration, world trade, and Guantanamo Bay. Even so, resurrecting America's image will be a slow, long-term process. [FULL TEXT ON REQUEST](#)

Plus - [Google News](#) as well as [Yahoo News](#) on **Elections** updated continuously

UPCOMING EVENTS



Elections Night Live! America.gov webchat

Our pundits and political experts will present constant coverage and analysis of Election Day 2008. Ask questions or simply tune in to see the latest updates. We will be online all night to keep you informed of the latest election news.

This webchat will take place at <http://statedept.connectsolutions.com/elections08>
No registration is needed. Simply choose "Enter as a Guest," and join the discussion.

Date: November 4- 5, Starting at 17:00 GMT and providing coverage throughout the night.

REMINDER: Please join us November 4 from 9:00 pm until November 5 at 9:00 am at **Carlton Hotel in Bratislava** for **U.S. Embassy – AmCham Elections Watch Party !**

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